

Wetherby

Drawer 19A

Artists-W

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Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

Isaac Augustus Wetherby

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

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During his first campaign, this oil of the young Abraham Lincoln was painted on a 48-pound flour sack of the Western Flour Mills Co., Davenport. It is now on display at the Davenport Public Museum. (Color photo by Phil Hutchison)

Sack Portrait Is Boost For Lincoln

By MILDRED BRENNAN
Staff Writer

Abraham Lincoln once said: "The Lord prefers common-looking people. That is the reason he makes so many of them."

It's reasonable to believe, because of this, that he would like the portrait of himself now on exhibit at the Davenport Public Museum.

It was painted in 1864 on a flour sack that at one time contained 48 pounds of flour milled by the Western Flour Mill Co., Davenport.

There is nothing uncommon about the face of the young Lincoln as interpreted by the artist, "Wetherby of Iowa City." It's the background of the picture that's uncommon.

RAIL FENCE

The artist has painted a log cabin with split rail fence on one side of Lincoln's head and the White House on the other. Underneath he stacked cannons and cannon balls. Red, white and blue streamers drape the top.

As if all that were not enough, the artist added slogans of the time, and the portrait was used

as a campaign poster in the first campaign.

The words "Lincoln and Hamlin," and such slogans as "Protection to White Men's Labor"; "Slavery Shuts Up Our Work-

the name of Johnson, Lincoln's second running mate, covers it.

Naturally, with the freedom of the slaves an accomplished fact, the slogans had to be changed.

A maul covers up one.

On it are the words, "Maul for the Rebel Crew." An ax in another corner of the canvas, brandishes the threat: "The ax for the root of slavery."

For those who are fans of Lincoln, this portrait painted in the shops"; "No More Slave States"; "Slavery Degrades Labor," were wedged into available space.

SECOND LEASE

The portrait got a second lease on life during Lincoln's second campaign. Because of the unique nature of the canvas, it's easy to see the changes that were made.

"Hamlin" is painted out, and

area, on a flour bag used in the area, brings to life Iowa in the 1860's and the excitement of the presidential campaigns.

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